

**Gene T. Harris, Ph.D.**

Superintendent/CEO

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*Mission: Each student is highly educated, prepared for leadership and service, and empowered for success as a citizen in a global community.*

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October 8, 2012

Columbus Board of Education  
270 E. State Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Board Members,

Since 1975, nearly 37 years, I have served students and families in the city of Columbus, and for a brief period, the state of Ohio. I have never regretted my career choice. During this time period, I had the opportunity to teach students at Everett Junior High and begin my leadership training at Central High School. During my time at Central, I experienced a school closing, never dreaming that almost 30 years later I would have to make recommendations similar to the ones Superintendent Joe Davis made in 1982!

My years as assistant principal and principal at Briggs and Mifflin High schools were most memorable. The majority of the former students whom I encounter today are from those experiences. I am humbled and exhilarated by the stories of their success, knowing that the staff in Columbus Schools contributed to their current well-being.

Working in central office, supervising principals and leading curriculum and operations, along with the experience as assistant superintendent in the Ohio Department of Education, helped to prepare me for the pinnacle of my professional career, serving as superintendent of Columbus City Schools. Not many have the opportunity to have their dream job, and certainly not for 12 years!

I was never interested in this role anyplace other than Columbus City Schools. Serving in my hometown has been my high honor. Together, we have increased graduation rates, created new programs and exposed teachers and students to ideas and educational opportunities that may never have seemed possible to them. We have created partnerships, resulting in thousands of volunteers providing exciting programs for our students—many of those through volunteer hours. This community has supported our students through a bond issue for new and replacement buildings (2002), an operating levy to support increased academic performance (2004), and a combined operating and bond issue funding innovative programs, textbooks, busses and technology (2008).

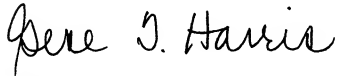
The Columbus City School District does not discriminate based upon sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, ancestry, familial status or military status with regard to admission, access, treatment or employment. This policy is applicable in all district programs and activities.

October 16, 2012

I have enjoyed immensely my work in Columbus Schools. Working with the many Columbus Board of Education members, students, staff, parents and the community has been my joy. Now it is time for me to write a new chapter.

Please accept this letter as official notice of my retirement, effective July 1, 2013. My last official day in the district will be June 28, 2013. Sincere thanks to each of you and this community for allowing me to have had this wonderful professional experience.

With humility and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gene T. Harris".

Gene T. Harris, Ph.D.

C: Cynthia Picciano